

Message Text

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PAGE 01 ADDIS 12784 250837Z

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ACTION AF-07

INFO OCT-01 EUR-08 ISO-00 AID-05 AGR-05 IO-04 IGA-01

CIAE-00 DODE-00 PM-03 H-01 INR-05 L-01 NSAE-00 NSC-05

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FM AMEMBASSY ADDIS ABABA

TO SECSTATE WASHDC 1622

INFO AMCONSUL ASMARA

AMEMBASSY KHARTOUM

AMEMBASSY LONDON

AMEMBASSY MOGADISCIO

AMEMBASSY NAIROBI

AMEMBASSY PARIS

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E.O.11652: NA

TAGS: PDEV PGOV ET

SUBJ: LAND REFORM

REF: MEMCON DATED OCTOBER 1, 1974

USAID MEMCON DIATED OCTOBER 18, 1974

1. DR. NEGUSSIE AYELE, CHAIRMAN OF HSIU POLITICAL SCIENCE DEPARTMENT AND KNOWN ADVISOR TO THE "DIRG" (WHO - SOME SAY - IS ON NEW LIST OF INDIVIDUALS SLATED FOR IMMINENT ARREST) TOLD EMBOFF THAT LAND REFORM PROCLAMATION WILL BE ANNOUNCED "VERY, VERY SOON." THIS CONCURS WITH STATEMENT OF GENERAL MEBRATU, GOVERNOR GENERAL, GEMU GOFFA, THAT LAND REFORM WOULD PROBABLY BE ANNOUNCED IN WEEK BEGINNING 28 OCTOBER. DR. NEGUSSIE STATED THAT LAND WOULD BE "NATIONALIZED" THROUGHOUT THE COUNTRY AND THAT EACH HEAD OF HOUSEHOLD WOULD BE ALLOWED TO FARM ONE GASHA (40 HECTARES) -- OTHER SOURCES SAY 3. HE SAID IT WOULD BE

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PAGE 02 ADDIS 12784 250837Z

UNLIKELY THAT COMPENSATION WOULD BE PAID EXCEPT IN A FEW CASES

WHERE LARGE CAPITAL INVESTMENTS HAD NOT BEEN SUFFICIENTLY AMORTIZED. COMMERCIAL FARMS WOULD CONTINUE INTERACT AND RETAIN PRESENT WORKERS WHO WOULD SHARE PROFITS.

2. NEGUSSIE'S ALLEGED ONE GASHA CEILING ALSO DIFFERS FROM GENERAL MEBRATU'S STATEMENT THAT IN GEMU GOFFA, AT LEAST, HEAD OF EACH HOUSEHOLD WOULD PROBABLY BE LIMITED TO 5 TO 10 HECTARES. ADDITIONALLY, ACCORDING TO MEBRATU, THE LAND REFORM PROCLAMATION WILL BE ISSUED BY THE AFCC, BUT WILL BE LEFT TO THE PROVINCIAL GOVERNORS (NOW "ADMINISTRATORS") TO ADMINISTER.

3. COMMENT: CEILING DIFFERENCES MAY RELATE TO FLEXIBILITIES BUILT INTO THE DECREE. THIS WOULD SEEM LOGICAL AND NECESSARY GIVEN DIFFERENT LAND HOLDING SYSTEMS IN VARIOUS PARTS OF THE EMPIRE AS WELL AS CLIMATIC, SOIL AND OTHER VARIATIONS AFFECTING PRODUCTIVITY. AS DEPT AWARE (SEE REFTELS), WE HAVE HAD OTHER INDICATIONS THAT PROVINCIAL ADMINISTRATORS (GOVGENS) MAY BE GIVEN CONSIDERABLE LATITUDE TO ADAPT LAND REFORM TO LOCAL CIRCUMSTANCES. WITH THE CONVERGENCE OF (A) THE IMPENDING TRIALS OF THE EX-MINISTERS AND NOBILITY, (B) THE SENDING OF THE STUDENTS TO THE COUNTRYSIDE AND (C) A LAND REFORM PROCLAMATION, THE ETHIOPIAN POLITICAL UPHEAVAL SHOULD BEGIN TO IMPACT ON THE COUNTRYSIDE WHERE MOST ETHIOPIANS LIVE.

WYMAN

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